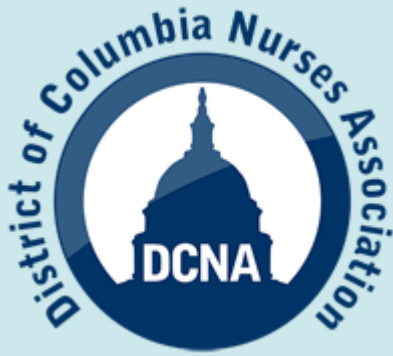


# DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

August 2024



## Contract Negotiations

### Howard University/Howard University Hospital – Contract Agreement Reached

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, DCNA members voted “Yes” to ratify the new collective bargaining agreement covering over 300 nurses, dietitians, social workers and pharmacists. The agreement is of a limited duration, expiring on June 30, 2025, but provides for a base salary raise of 3.2% for all members, retroactive to the first full pay period after July 1, 2024. The Agreement also provides for two pilot staffing committee programs in the Mother & Infant Services and in MICU/SICU departments. The goal of the committees shall be to evaluate the current staffing system, develop, monitor, and improve staffing for the units, using the current aspirational staffing matrix as a starting point.



The Committee may analyze such factors as patient needs and acuity, environment in which care is provided, unit and Hospital census, professional characteristics, such as clinical competencies, experience and skillset of the individual nurse, standards of professional practice, competency with technology and clinical interventions, mix of supplemental staff, previous staffing patterns that have demonstrated improved outcomes, unplanned absences, including sick calls and emergencies, vacancies, and staff feedback. The Employer must notify DCNA on a monthly basis of each day aspirational staffing levels have not been met. “With the commencement of these pilots, DCNA has moved closer to the DC area’s first ever realistic agreement on nurse/patient staffing ratios. We commit to organizing and building a contract campaign to come in strong in the Spring of 2025 at the bargaining table, said Edward J. Smith, DCNA Executive Director.

## The Wheels of Justice Keep Turning – NLRB Denies UHS Appeal

On August 26<sup>th</sup>, the Office of General Counsel, NLRB denied Universal Health Services’ appeal of the dismissal of an unfair labor practice charge filed in March 2023. The charge alleged that Mr. Angelo Estrellas, serving in the capacity of a manager at The George Washington University Hospital violated the National Labor Relations Act by engaging in activity supporting the campaign to bring the union to the Hospital. On May 23, 2024, The NLRB Regional Director dismissed the charge, stating “The evidence presented during the investigation was insufficient to establish that [Mr. Estrellas] had the authority to exercise any of the twelve primary supervisory indicia listed in Section 2(11) of the [NLRA] with the use of independent judgment and in the interest of the employer... The ... allegations are premised on a finding that the employee was a statutory supervisor. As a result, because I find that there is insufficient evidence that [Estrellas] was a statutory supervisor, the investigation also failed to establish that the Union violated Section 8(b)(1)(A) as alleged. Accordingly, further investigation is not warranted, and I am refusing to issue complaint in this matter.

## CSS RN/LPNs Wage Adjustment

CSS nurses have secured additional wage increases connected to our bargaining and activism last year and earlier the year. The final agreement last cycle — include a provision for market rate increases over and above the wage package we secured. Over the last three weeks we have been meeting with CSS Management and their lawyers to better understand the details of what increases are being offered.

The bosses have not been able to provide details of their specific calculations but are generally relying on some combination of years of experience and years working with CSS as a baseline for determining LPN and RN increases.

These increases require a baseline of experience of six years or more. While we are not in a position to bargain these increases we can raise individual concerns with the officials at Children's. This again is imperfect, but puts us much further ahead than we were at this time last year.

Congratulations on your collective hard work to make sure nurses are treated and paid fairly.

## United Medical Center Closes Outpatient Units – Union Vow to Fight Back

DCNA and SEIU1199 met with Channel 9 news reporter Delia Gonvalves on August 28<sup>th</sup> and described actions taken by United Medical Center that violate the unions' collective bargaining agreements relating to notice of layoffs and severance pay. Further, it is not apparent whether UMC will adhere to provisions that allow an affected employee with seniority to transfer to another position for which the employee qualifies. Ms. Gonvalves dug deeper; she was advised by DC Councilmember Christina Henderson (Chair, Committee on Health), that UMC violated DC law by failing to notify patients 90 days prior to shutting down services. Please go to [Outrage over service cuts to DC's only hospital East of the River | wusa9.com](https://www.wusa9.com) to see and read the news story.

### Labor Day Reflection

My dad was a shop steward and diesel mechanic and he fought for his co-workers' rights on a daily basis. My mom was a confidential secretary in labor relations who let the union know when management was planning layoffs, at the risk of her job. They always did right by workers and instilled in me a belief in the dignity of work and the necessity to treat all workers fairly, equitably and with respect.



My dad, Gordon Smith, is no longer with us, but I know he would be, and is somewhere from above, proud of what we accomplished at GWU Hospital in July 2023. But he would also say to me ... and you, that we must commit to justice and our right to bargain over a contract. He knew that through hard work and a commitment to fight together, we can achieve better lives for our families, union brothers, sisters and siblings and our community. My mom, Virginia Smith, still engaged and supportive of unions at the young age of 94, continues to inspire me and fights for health care workers' rights.

So, this Labor Day and throughout all the days to come, know that I commit every ounce of my energy to fight for you, your patients and the DC community to better our working conditions and to fulfill what is a human right – excellent health care, accessible and affordable for all. It is only through collective action that we can achieve our goals. Problems in ICUs are a problem for all. Problems in the ED are a problem for all. Problems at United Medical Center are problems for nurses at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, GWU Hospital, Children's National Hospital, Children's School Services, Howard University Hospital, DC Government facilities and anywhere else where health care workers are employed.

Enjoy the bbq or picnic or just a day off on Monday, September 2d, but take a minute to remember all the sacrifices our ancestors in labor endured to achieve the right to organize, the right to strike and the benefits so many of us enjoy today. Let us stand together against corporate greed and management indifference to the true meaning of patient care. When we support each other and stand together and fight, we win.

Edward J. Smith, Esq., Executive Director, DCNA



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For Assignment Despite Objection and Grievance forms, visit [www.dcn.org](http://www.dcn.org).